(e) the details of any other initiatives taken by Government to promote nanotechnology research in India?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI KAPIL SIBAL): (a) to (c) and (e) India and Canada have concluded an inter-governmental agreement at Toronto on 18th November, 2005 facilitating joint scientific and technological cooperation. Nano-Science and Nano-Technology; Sustainable Energy; Biomedical Technologies; Infotainment; and Natural Disasters and Earth Sciences have been identified as priority areas of cooperation.

(c) It has been suggested to the Canadian Government that a joint Indo-Canadian Centre for Nanotechnology may be set up in India. The suggestion is in the initial stage and no firm response agreeing to this suggestion has been received from the Canadian side. However, Government has launched a "Nano science and Nanotechnology initiative (NSTI)" programme in October, 2001 for encouraging research in nanotechnology.

(d) and (e) Under NSTI, about 100 R&D projects have been supported in the areas of nanofabrication, nanolithography, DNA chips, nanocomposites, molecular electronics, nanosensors, drug delivery, carbon nanotubes and wireless etc. 10 Centres of Excellence/Core groups in Nano-Science have been established. 6 new centres on nanoelectronics, NEMS/MEMS, sensors, tissue engineering have also been approved recently. A sum of approximately Rs. 100 crores has been allocated to various research institutes in the country so far under this programme.

Connecting naxal affected States

2532. DR. M.A.M. RAMASWAMY: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a plan to connect the naxal affected States is on foot;

(b) if so, the details of the naxal affected States to be connected by roads.

(c) the total estimated cost of this project; and

(d) the time likely to be taken to connect all the naxal affected States?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI K.H. MUNIYAPPA): (a) and (b) No, Sir.

(c) and (d) Do not arise.

Mega project for National Sea Route

2533. SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received any proposal from the Government of Andhra Pradesh for taking up of a mega project for the establishment of a National Sea Route and Associated Maritime Infrastructure Projects;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether Government propose to appoint a Joint Coordination Committee for implementation of the project?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) and (b) In the context of the exercise undertaken to formulate a policy for the Maritime Sector (Ports, Merchant Shipping and IWT) and the National Maritime Development Programme, the Government of Andhra Pradesh has submitted a proposal for establishment of National Sea Waterways along the North Coastal Andhra Pradesh with the associated development of Coastal and Marine Infrastructure of Ports/Warehouses and complementary development of Coastal and Marine Infrastructure and IMO compliances, for consideration and approval of the Central Government. The Project component includes development and establishment of new ports at 10 locations, development and construction of 4 trestle structures, improvements to existing minor ports, logistics and warehouses, sub-projects like ship-repair facility, fish landing and fishery infrastructure, oil spill response unit, ship breaking yard, coastal tourism and recreational infrastructure, sheltered waters and ports of refuge as also preparation of Detailed Project Reports. The total project estimate as furnished by the Government of Andhra Pradesh is Rs. 6,050 crores out of which an amount of Rs. 1,353.63 crores is proposed from private sector and financial support of Rs. 4,699 crores